



## Town of Warren, Rhode Island

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# Minutes of the Economic Development Board

The Town of Warren, RI Economic Development Board met at a Regular Meeting on May 21, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall, located at 514 Main Street. The presiding officer was Brandt Heckert. Board members present were Karen Dionne, Mark Lombari, Kate Dickson, Sara Volino, Christine Lichatz and Darcy DaCosta. Board members Patrick DaSocio and Spencer Morris were absent. Ex officio member Caroline Wells was absent. Kristin MacDonald was present at the meeting to serve as Secretary to the EDB.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

### **1. Review and Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting of April 16, 2012**

The minutes from the regular meeting held on April 16, 2012 were reviewed by the members via email. Ms. Volino made a motion to accept the minutes, the motion was seconded by Mr. Lombari and all members were in favor.

### **2. Discussion of draft sign ordinance from Solicitor**

The Board agreed to postpone the discussion of this item until the next meeting. Mr. Heckert will email the Board the latest revision of the draft of the sign ordinance for review.

### **3. Discussion and Action on Business Friendly memo to council (DaCosta)**

Mr. Heckert stated that the items covered in the business friendly memorandum to Town Council were reviewed at the joint economic meeting with Town Council on May 17<sup>th</sup>; he felt that at this point that submitting the memo is unnecessary. The point person for Town Hall was discussed at length and other items have been accomplished or are ongoing.

### **4. Report on Discover Warren activities (Dickson)**

Ms. Dickson reported that Discover Warren is sponsoring a float in the Bristol Fourth of July parade. There is a Food Truck event being planned for June 30<sup>th</sup> which will take place at the American Tourister Mill. Discover Warren is also starting a universal "wooden coin" currency for local businesses. Ms. Dickson said the coin is in the design stage and should be available in the summer. The Walking Map with the Warren Preservation Society is in the works and the map should be ready for distribution during the summer.

## **5. Report on meeting with Daniel Kertzner of RI Foundation regarding creating a business/arts liaison position in town hall (Dickson)**

Ms. Dickson briefly reported that she met with Daniel Kertzner and Mary Kim Arnold of RI Foundation to discuss the business/arts liaison in town hall. They pointed her in the direction of other groups that have received grant funding for similar projects. Ms. Dickson has not yet heard back from The RI Foundation; she will continue to research potential funding for this position.

## **6. Report on Shipshape Challenge (Dickson/DeSocio)**

Ms. Dickson reported that they are looking for corporate sponsorships and small grants to help fund this project. She is currently waiting to hear from Columbus Credit Union and East Bay Chamber of Commerce, as well as the New England Grass Roots Fund. Ms. Dickson asked for ambassadors to help build sponsorship for the Shipshape Challenge. Mr. Heckert asked how the event will be promoted; Ms. Dickson said there will be direct mailings, posters, decals and lawn signs as well as back pack information for kids in September. The event will also be promoted in the East Bay newspaper on a weekly basis with before and after photographs, etc. Mr. Heckert also noted that the Shipshape Challenge would be a good introductory point for the EDB business outreach program.

## **7. Report from the Gateway Signage workgroup (Dionne/Lombardi/Volino)**

The Board discussed the wording of the gateway signs as well as design aspects like color and font style. The Board has decided in placing signs in 5 or 6 locations, and the work group is in the process of establishing the placement location of the signs. The Board would like to have at least three of signs in place in conjunction with the Ship Shape Challenge.

## **8. Discussion of the May 17<sup>th</sup> joint economic strategy meeting with Town Council**

Ms. Volino's concern is that the specifics that were suggested for Town Council are acted upon, such as contacting the RIEDC. The Board felt that it would be productive to have joint economic strategy meetings with Town Council on a quarterly basis, or to at least invite council members to EDB meetings on a more regular basis. Ms. Volino also felt it was important to follow up on the revision on the planning and zoning ordinances, as well as to include the planning and zoning board members in the revision process. Currently the town solicitor is working on the revision of the planning and zoning ordinances, but Ms. Volino noted that is important to have planning and zoning board members contribute to the revision process. Mr. Heckert said he would follow up with Caroline Wells to see if there is a plan going forward to incorporate SmartCode in these revisions. Ms. Lichtz would like to initiate arts project that would feature local business owners.

Ms. Volino made motion was made to adjourn, the motion was seconded by Ms. DaCosta, and all members were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristin M. MacDonald

Minutes submitted by Kristin MacDonald  
June 14, 2012

